



NEWS RELEASE

PRESS OFFICE

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ADMINISTRATOR ALVAREZ LEADS FIRST SMALL BUSINESS TRADE MISSION TO IRELAND

WASHINGTON – U.S. Small Business Administration Administrator Aida Alvarez will lead about 20 sales-minded high-tech small companies from all over the country on a strategic trade mission to Dublin, Ireland.

“This historic mission will be an intense, results-focused session aimed at doing business,” Administrator Alvarez said. “It is designed not only to promote American small business interests in Ireland, but also in the greater European Union through partnerships between U.S. and Irish firms.”

Administrator Alvarez said the Strategic Partnership Development Mission will establish a new and expanded business arrangement with a reorganized Enterprise Ireland for trading partnerships between U.S. and Irish small businesses. It marks the first time an SBA Administrator has led such a delegation to the Republic of Ireland and the first time American firms have gone to Ireland under the U.S./Ireland Business Partnership Initiative.

“Our goal for the mission is to secure substantial business partnerships between small and medium-sized American and Irish businesses,” Administrator Alvarez said. “We want to develop links between dynamic, growth-oriented Irish businesses and U.S. companies that can profit from such partnerships by accessing the European Market.

“We recognize that diversity, trade, and technology are sources of strength for all economies of the world,” she added. “This mission brings together all of these elements – with small business leading the way. It’s no coincidence that the companies participating in the mission are high-tech and that nine of them are women-owned and 10 are minority-owned.”

The Strategic Partnership Development Mission is a direct result of President Clinton's White House Conference on Trade and Investment in Ireland and Northern Ireland, held in May 1995. One of the results of that meeting was a bilateral commitment to form partnerships between businesses in the U.S. and the Republic of Ireland.

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In Dublin, Administrator Alvarez will sign a new and expanded partnership agreement to increase trade opportunities for small businesses in both countries.

The agreements build on work started in November 1995, when SBA and Enterprise Ireland, an Irish government agency that is analogous to a combination of the SBA and the U.S. Department of Commerce, signed a bilateral agreement establishing a formal partnership. The SBA and Enterprise Ireland agreed to identify, contact, and screen prospective businesses in the two countries for strategic business alliances.

Under the agreement to be signed in Dublin, the SBA specifically agreed to:

- Identify small United States companies that have expressed an interest in participating in the program.
- Analyze each business in relation to a United States-Irish strategic business alliance.
- Provide the names of the interested United States businesses to Enterprise Ireland.
- Provide Enterprise Ireland with specific information on each interested U.S. business, including its alliance objectives.
- Coordinate partnership missions of Irish businesses to the U.S. and reciprocal missions of U.S. businesses to Ireland.
- Organize suitable public relations events and other activities needed to implement the initiative.
- Provide ongoing technical support to U.S. businesses to aid in implementation of the alliances.

Since the inception of the U.S./Ireland Business Partnership Initiative, the SBA and Enterprise Ireland have organized and coordinated four partnership missions of Irish businesses to the U.S. More than 100 Irish businesses have met with more than 300 U.S. businesses to discuss potential strategic partnership arrangements. So far, participants have signed 49 agreements, with more expected over the next year.

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(List of Participating Small Businesses Attached)

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SMALL BUSINESSES PARTICIPATING IN THE IRELAND TRIP

Eleanor Andrews, The Andrews Group, Anchorage, AK

Fernando Ampuero and Ellison Ferrall, The Aquafuture Corp.,
Monterey, CA

Charlie Priestley, Braswell Precision, Inc.,
Glen Burnie, MD

Thomas B. Malone and Michael Creedon, Carlow International, Inc., Falls Church, VA

Dr. Chang Yul Cha and Song Hee Cha, CHA Corp., Laramie, WY

Richard Lowney and Linda Lowney, Clearview Software,
Amherst, NH

Om P. Bansal, Compro Systems, Jessup, MD

Timothy Woods, Computing Made Simple, Inc., Fresno, CA

Carol Ann Hurley, EBS Econotel, East Providence, RI

Richard Lawlor, Educational Video Conferencing, Inc.
Yonkers, NY

Karl S. Keller and Andrea Keller, Explore Reasoning Systems, Inc., Vienna, VA

Ali Nezhad, FEM Engineering, Los Angeles, CA

Salvador V. Vassallo, Industrias Vassalo, Inc.,
Coto Laurel, PR

Lydia Vargas Fuller, INNOVA Consulting Services, Valparaiso, IN

Nikki Olyai, Innovision Technologies, Novi, MI

Dr. Charles Roos, National Recovery Technologies, Nashville, TN

Patrick O. Murphy and Victoria McCammon Murphy, Pan Atlantic, Portland, ME

Paul K. Matthias, Polaris Imaging, Inc., Narragansett, RI

Carlos Galvan, Preferred Technologies, Lebanon, NH

Harold Pachios, Preti, Flaherty Beliveau, Pachios, Portland, ME

Dr. Sheree Wen, Wen Technology, Yonkers, NY